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6 Newest Republican Senat

Form Team of Their Own

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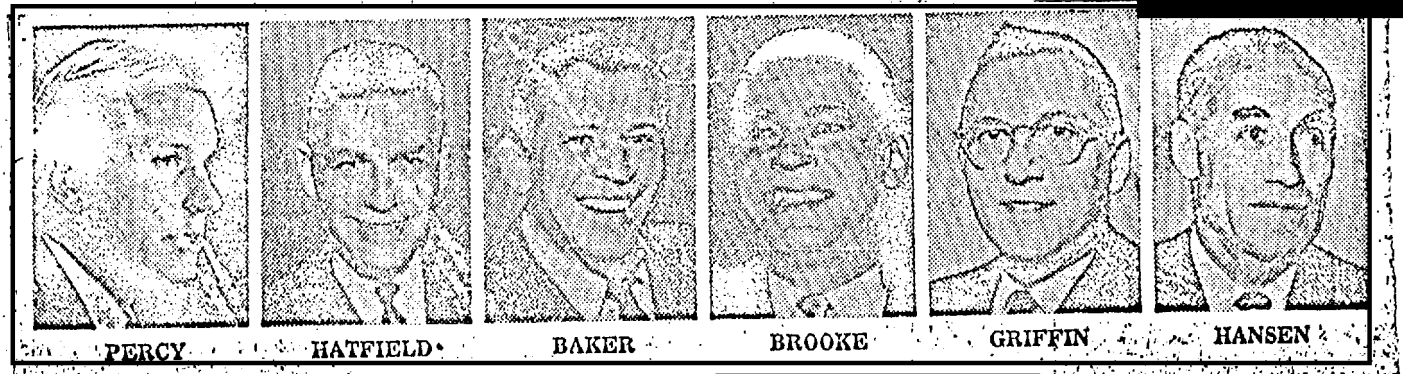

PERCY HATFIELD BAKER BROOKE GRIFFIN HANSEN

By JACK BELL
Associated Press Staff Writer

The six newest Republican senators have formed an informal study club to discuss national issues.

Most of the six, generally classed as moderates, say they won't go along with Senate GOP Leader Everett M. Dirksen's opposition to three major proposals—the U.S.-Soviet consular treaty, expansion of East-West trade and an open housing provision in any civil rights bill.

But individually they deny they plan to join forces with GOP moderates of more seniority who have made it clear they are not going to follow the Illinois senator's lead on some domestic and foreign policy matters, including the consular treaty.

There has been some private grumbling among these more experienced moderates that Dirksen often takes more conservative positions than they think is justified by Republican opinion in their states.

Dirksen told newsmen that he not only saw no threat to his leadership in the formation of the study group but that he thoroughly approved of it.

"I wished it embraced more members," he said.

Sen. Charles H. Percy, R-Ill., said the new GOP members are primarily interested in getting background information on which to base their individual positions on major issues.

"There is no thought of challenging Senator Dirksen's leadership," he said. "He and I have differences of opinion on several issues and we discuss them frankly. He has never tried in any way to get me to change a stand I have taken."

He said Dirksen has accepted an invitation to meet with the group soon.

Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., agreed with Percy's assessment of the group's objectives. He said he had not been subjected to any "arm twisting" when he opposed Dirksen.

Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr., R-Tenn., said he isn't going to let the fact that he is Dirksen's son-in-law influence his vote on specific issues. And he said he leans toward support of the consular treaty.

Hatfield and Percy are regarded as "doves" on the Vietnam war. Dirksen generally has supported President Johnson's course and in the past has urged even greater escalation of military efforts than the President has been willing to undertake.

The GOP study group already has been briefed by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms. Members plan to invite other Cabinet members to meet with them.

Besides Percy, Hatfield and Baker, other members of the group are Sens. Edward W. Brooke, R-Mass., Robert P. Griffin, R-Mich., and Clifford P. Hansen, R-Wyo.

All except Griffin are freshmen. He was appointed to a Vacancy in 1966.

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